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FM CNO WASHINGTON DC//N00//

TO NAVOP

BT

THIS IS A 2 PART MSG COLLATED BY MDS

UNCLAS //N00000//

NAVOP 006/97

MSGID/GENADMIN/CNO N00//

SUBJ/SHELTERING THE FORCE//

RMKS/1. SHELTERING SAILORS AND FAMILIES IS A CORE QOL ISSUE AND AN IMPORTANT PART OF EVERY SAILOR'S REGULAR MILITARY COMPENSATION. NEW INITIATIVES IN FAMILY HOUSING, BACHELOR QUARTERS (BQ), SHIPBOARD HABITABILITY, AND HOUSING ALLOWANCES ARE UNDERWAY WHICH REINFORCE OUR COMMITMENT TO THE BEST POSSIBLE QOL--ENSURING SAILORS AND THEIR FAMILIES WILL BE COMFORTABLE ASHORE AND AFLOAT. THE PURPOSE OF THIS NAVOP IS TO ENSURE ALL HANDS UNDERSTAND CURRENT INITIATIVES AND REALIZE THAT SHELTER OPTIONS FOR SINGLES AND FAMILIES ARE EXPANDING. ADDITIONALLY, THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO EMPHASIZE BOTH MY POLICY REGARDING THESE NEW IDEAS AND MY CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO THE CAREER SAILOR IN SHELTERING THE FORCE:

A. SHIPBOARD HABITABILITY INITIATIVES WILL CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT MORE EFFICIENT STATE-OF-THE-ART, COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT TO RAISE THE SHIPBOARD STANDARD OF LIVING, REDUCE PROCUREMENT, INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE COSTS AND IMPROVE LIFE CYCLE SUPPORT.

B. ALL SINGLE FIRST CLASS PETTY OFFICERS (E-6) ABOARD SHIP ARE ENTITLED TO BAQ/VHA. ASHORE E-6'S ARE ALSO ASSURED BAQ/VHA AUTHORIZATION. ADDITIONALLY, SHIPBOARD E-5'S MAY BE AUTHORIZED GOVERNMENT QUARTERS ASHORE OR BAQ/VHA, AS OF 1 JUL 97 (NAVADMIN 160/97).

C. INCREASED FUNDING, AGGRESSIVE LEADERSHIP, AND THOUGHTFUL PLANNING AND PRIORITIZATION FOR NAVY FAMILY HOUSING IN THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE GREATLY IMPROVED THE QUALITY OF OUR UNITS AND NEIGHBORHOODS. SOME EXAMPLES ARE THE NEWLY RENOVATED NEIGHBORHOODS OF BELLEVUE IN WASHINGTON DC AND BEN MOREELL IN NORFOLK. THERE ARE ALSO MAJOR RENOVATION PROJECTS NEARING COMPLETION FOR MOANALUA IN PEARL HARBOR, BAYVIEW IN SAN DIEGO AND TEXAS TERRACE IN KINGSVILLE. RENOVATION EFFORTS HAVE JUST STARTED FOR HALE MOKU IN PEARL HARBOR, AND NEW CONSTRUCTION HAS BEGUN AT THE NAPLES SUPPORT SITE.

D. LEGISLATION HAS BEEN ENACTED TO ALLOW PUBLIC-PRIVATE VENTURES FOR FAMILY HOUSING AND BQ'S, IN WHICH THE NAVY LEVERAGES ITS MONEY AND ASSETS WITH PRIVATE DEVELOPERS TO GET A GREATER NUMBER OF FAMILY UNITS AND BQ SPACES BUILT, RENOVATED, OR OPERATED FOR THE SAME AMOUNT OF NAVY INVESTMENT. THIS INNOVATIVE USE OF SOME PRIVATE FUNDS HAS BEEN LOOSELY AND INCORRECTLY REFERRED TO AS AN EXAMPLE OF NAVY, QUOTE, GETTING OUT OF THE HOUSING BUSINESS, END QUOTE. IN FACT, WE ARE SIMPLY CONDUCTING OUR HOUSING BUSINESS MORE CAREFULLY, PROVIDING MORE OPTIONS AND SEEKING EVERY POSSIBLE EFFICIENCY TO IMPROVE THE SHELTER SITUATION FOR OUR SAILORS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

E. PERMANENT PARTY BQ'S FOR ENLISTED SAILORS ARE BEING UPGRADED TO THE NEW 1+1 STANDARD AND FURNISHINGS ARE BEING IMPROVED USING A WHOLE-ROOM CONCEPT. THESE EFFORTS HAVE DRAMATICALLY IMPROVED BQ RESIDENT SATISFACTION RATINGS DURING THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE PROGRAM. THE LONG-TERM COMMITMENT OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO UPGRADE OUR BQ'S WILL ACHIEVE THESE NEW STANDARDS NAVY-WIDE. IN SOME SITUATIONS, WE MIGHT USE THE 2+0 STANDARD TO PROVIDE IMPROVED BARRACKS FOR MORE SAILORS FASTER. RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS IN LEMOORE AND EVERETT, RENOVATED TO THE 2+0 STANDARD, HAVE RECEIVED HIGH PRAISE FROM THE SAILORS LIVING THERE.

F. A NEW SYSTEM FOR HOUSING ALLOWANCES HAS BEEN DEVELOPED AND REFINED AS A FORMAL PART OF THE FY98'S BUDGET PROPOSAL. IF APPROVED, THE NEW ALLOWANCE COMBINES BAQ AND VHA INTO ONE BASIC HOUSING ALLOWANCE. BY USING CURRENT HOUSING COSTS IT WILL MORE CLOSELY MATCH ACTUAL COSTS ACROSS GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS. IT IS A DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT OVER THE CURRENT VHA SYSTEM WHICH DISADVANTAGES SAILORS IN HIGH-COST AREAS AND MANY IN JUNIOR PAYGRADES. DOD EXPECTS TO PHASE-IN THE NEW SYSTEM OVER FIVE YEARS STARTING IN JAN 98.

2. HOUSING ASSIGNMENT POLICY DISCUSSION:

A. DOD GUIDANCE IS TO RELY HEAVILY ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO PROVIDE HOUSING FOR OUR SAILORS. IN LOCAL HOUSING MARKETS WHICH COULD NOT SUPPORT ALL OUR REQUIREMENTS IN THE PAST, WE HAVE BUILT FAMILY HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE. OVER THE YEARS WE HAVE ACCUMULATED A STOCK OF 72,000 HOUSING UNITS WORLDWIDE. BECAUSE OF VARYING LOCAL CONDITIONS, THE HOUSING ASSIGNMENT POLICY MAY SEEM INCONSISTENT BETWEEN FLEET CONCENTRATION AREAS. INSTALLATION COMMANDERS HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO PLAN, PROGRAM, AND DETERMINE THE BEST POSSIBLE USE OF THEIR HOUSING INVENTORY WHILE TAKING CARE TO ENSURE THAT ALL MILITARY MEMBERS PERMANENTLY STATIONED IN THE AREA ARE ELIGIBLE FOR ASSIGNMENT TO NAVY FAMILY HOUSING. ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSIGNMENT TO FAMILY HOUSING IS A HIGHLY VALUED CAREER FORCE OPTION WHICH CONTINUES TO MITIGATE THE HARDSHIPS OF FREQUENT TRANSFERS AND WILL NOT BE COMPROMISED. OUR CURRENT RANGE OF INITIATIVES SEEKS A BALANCE BETWEEN THE DESIRE TO ADEQUATELY HOUSE JUNIOR SAILORS WHO CAN AFFORD LESS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY TO RETAIN ALL BENEFITS AND OPTIONS FOR ALL SAILORS IN THE CAREER FORCE.

B. GEO BACHELORS (GB) ARE SAILORS WHO ARE SEPARATED FROM THEIR FAMILY IN A PCS STATUS. THIS IS AN ISSUE THAT REQUIRES LOCAL LEADERSHIP ATTENTION THROUGHOUT THE NAVY. WE MUST REFRAIN FROM CREATING THE PERCEPTION THAT WE ARE MAKING IT SO CONVENIENT THAT WE ACTUALLY ENCOURAGE FAMILY SEPARATIONS. HOWEVER, REGIONAL AND INSTALLATION COMMANDERS SHOULD MAKE A GOOD FAITH, AGGRESSIVE ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE THE BEST POSSIBLE SPACE-AVAILABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR SAILORS WHO ARE SEPARATED FROM FAMILY IN A PCS STATUS. WHEN DRIVEN BY LARGE NUMBERS, THESE ACCOMMODATIONS NEED NOT MEET ALL OF THE ADEQUACY CRITERIA REQUIRED FOR "PERMANENT PARTY" SAILORS. ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD BE CONTINUALLY REVIEWED TO ENSURE WE ARE TRULY DOING OUR VERY BEST TO HELP SAILORS SEPARATED FROM FAMILY. REALIZING THAT BQ SPACE IS LIMITED ON MANY STATIONS, REGIONAL AND INSTALLATION COMMANDERS SHALL COORDINATE ASSIGNMENT OF AVAILABLE BQ SPACES AT ALL ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION TO MAXIMIZE UTILIZATION. REGIONAL COMMANDERS SHALL ENSURE THAT GB REVIEW BOARDS ARE ESTABLISHED AND EFFECTIVE IN ALL NAVY LOCATIONS TO ASSIST IN THE ALLOCATION OF BQ ASSETS FOR SAILORS IN THAT CATEGORY.

C. A RESIDENT ADVISOR PROGRAM IS A LEADERSHIP RESOURCE THAT AN INSTALLATION COMMANDER MAY USE TO ASSIST MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL IN THE BQ. SOME SAILORS SEPARATED FROM FAMILY MAY APPLY TO BE BARRACKS RESIDENT ADVISORS AND BE GIVEN A MORE SECURE HOUSING ARRANGEMENT. RESIDENT ADVISORS ARE SENIOR ENLISTED SAILORS WHO LIVE IN THE BQ, ARE ASSIGNED COLLATERAL MANAGEMENT AND QA RESPONSIBILITIES AND ARE AVAILABLE TO PROVIDE COUNSELING AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO JUNIOR SINGLE SAILOR RESIDENTS OF THE BQ.

3. HOUSING THE FORCE VISION: IN PROVIDING THE BEST QUALITY HOUSING FOR BOTH MARRIED AND SINGLE, SHIPBOARD AND SHORE-BASED, WE HAVE ABUNDANT CHALLENGES. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE IMPROVEMENTS IN HOUSING ALLOWANCES AND EXPAND AND UPGRADE HOUSING OPTIONS. IN SINGLE SAILOR HOUSING, WE WILL ASSIGN E1-E4 TO THE BQ BECAUSE IT PROMOTES AND PRESERVES OUR CULTURE, SUPPORTS UNIT INTEGRITY AND IS A COST-EFFECTIVE USE OF OUR EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE; HOWEVER, WE WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE OVERALL QOL IN THOSE SAME BARRACKS. ADDITIONALLY, WE WILL CONTINUE INVESTING HEAVILY IN IMPROVED

HABITABILITY FOR SAILORS ON BOARD SHIPS. AS WE GO FORWARD, WE ARE STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN JUNIOR SAILOR NEEDS AND CAREER SAILOR BENEFITS, AND DISCOURAGING FAMILY SEPARATION WHILE SUPPORTING, TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE, THOSE WHOSE FAMILIES DO NOT RELOCATE.

4. REST ASSURED THAT I AM DEDICATED TO IMPROVING YOUR QOL AND PROVIDING THE SHELTERING OPTIONS THAT YOU DESERVE. THE INITIATIVES DISCUSSED HAVE THE FULL VISIBILITY OF MY STAFF AND THE FLEET COMMANDERS, AND WE WILL WORK TOGETHER IN MAINTAINING THIS COMMITMENT TO YOU.

5. RELEASED BY ADM JAY L. JOHNSON, CNO//

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